

Remarks

This is in response to the non-final Office Action mailed on August 25, 2004. Claims 21-33 remain pending. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested for at least the following reasons.

Claims 21-33 were rejected in section 2 of the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Takashi et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,077,154. This rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Claim 21 is directed to a method for removing a hackle of an optical fiber from an end face of a ferrule. Claim 21 recites placing a ferrule in a fixture, and mechanically bringing the end face of the ferrule into contact with a polishing structure such that the hackle is removed.

The hackle formed on the end face of a fiber is a defect including surface irregularities created during cleaving of the fiber. See, for example, the example definition of "hackle" provided at the Appendix hereto. In the prior art, hackle was typically removed from the fiber using a manual, hand-polishing process before machine polishing was used to polish the fiber. See Application, p. 6, ll. 3 and 4; "ADC FasTerm™ Multimode LX.5™ Connector Installation Instructions," ADC Telecommunications, Inc., Issue 1 (March 2001), pp. 19 and 20, cited on the Information Disclosure Statement filed on February 9, 2004; and "ADC FasTerm™ Multimode LX.5 Connector Installation Instructions," ADC Telecommunications, Inc., Issue 1 (June 1999), p. 19, also cited on the Information Disclosure Statement. See also the hand-polishing technique for hackle removal described and illustrated at pages 3-1 - 3-3 of the "LX.5® Assembly Manual" attached at the Appendix hereto.

Takashi discloses a polishing apparatus for optical fibers. Takashi fails to disclose or suggest hackle removal. Therefore, Takashi fails to disclose or suggest a method for removing a hackle of an optical fiber from an end face of a ferrule, including placing a ferrule in a fixture, and mechanically bringing the end face of the ferrule into contact with a polishing structure such that the hackle is removed, as recited by claim 21. Reconsideration and allowance of claim 21, as well as claims 22-27 that depend therefrom, are respectfully requested.

Claim 28 is directed to a method for removing hackle. Claim 28 recites, among other limitations, moving the arm of a polishing apparatus using a mechanical lift so that a plurality of ferrules come into contact with a polishing surface, and driving the polishing surface using a drive mechanism such that the hackle is removed. Therefore, claim 28, as well as claims 29-33

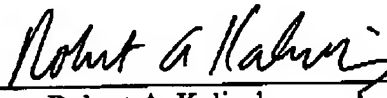
that depend therefrom, should be allowable for at least reasons similar to those provided above with respect to claim 21. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Appendix including two references.

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